

# We Have Community in Common!

Self-Advocates of Indiana Live the "Olmstead Decision"



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# We Have Community in Common!

## Self-Advocates of Indiana Live the "Olmstead Decision"



### Self-Advocates of Indiana Board of Directors welcome you!

"We invite you to join us as we explore the principles of self-determination and the laws that defend our right to be equal citizens in our communities."

### Self-Advocates of Indiana: Who are we?

We are people with developmental disabilities who started our state group 12 years ago. We got together because of a grant from the Governor's Planning Council and we found out that we had the same hopes and dreams as other people. We hadn't known there were other people like us who wanted more for themselves. We found out that people didn't even think we could do it. But we've proved them wrong. It is 12 years later and our organization is still going strong. We will have our incorporation and not-for-profit status very soon now.



**Darcus Nims**, vice-president and founder of Self-Advocates of Indiana

## INDIANA NETWORK: COLUMBIA CITY & FORT WAYNE



*One For All.* Self-advocates from Columbia City, Indiana, have a message for all self-advocates: "We want people to know we have a lot of abilities."

Members of the self-advocacy group each had something to say about what self-advocacy means to them.

- Ben Thompson, president: "I can help other people who have the same disability I have."
- Ron Alwood, Sergeant-at-Arms: "I like having my own home in the community - it's quieter. I like to help other people."
- Tina Lough: "I like my group home but want to move into my own home some day soon."
- Larry Davidson: "It's important for us to speak out for ourselves and to get all public places in the community easier for people with disabilities to get around in."
- Tremont Beachem: "I like living in my new group home and my roommates."

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*Together we make a difference.* People First of Fort Wayne came together to learn about their rights and responsibilities. They also work together on learning to become more active and effective as citizens.

Future goals of the group include voting in elections, learning about public safety in the community, and exploring the treatment of people with disabilities.





## INDIANA NETWORK: PRINCETON & RICHMOND



*The “Exploring Frontiers” Job Club, from left to right, includes The Rev Jarmon Perkins, Joe Carithers, Daniel Mayer, Cindy Petty, and Don Morrow.*

Daniel Mayer, a ten-year member of his local Kiwanis Club, and a participant of the “Exploring Frontiers” Job Club at the Gibson County Area Rehabilitation Centers, Inc., in Princeton, Indiana, is amongst friends.

Club President Cindy Petty says, “We’re so glad to have Daniel as a member. He always helps out at Pancake Days and at our Radio Auction, and pitches in on other events. He’s a very active member.”

The “Exploring Frontiers” Job Club is the self-advocates group at New Frontiers Employment Services, the placement office for Gibson County Area Rehab. The purpose for members is to support each other in vocational pursuits. During the times of the year when the United Way is not fund-raising, they put on fund-raisers to help individuals in need.



“My name is Ron Mackey. I am the president of the Wayne County Self-Advocates in Richmond, Indiana.

My goal for our self-advocates group is to get more people involved in self-advocacy. I’m proud of our group because we all get along good and when decisions come around we all pitch in and work as a team.”

*Now that you've been introduced to some people with disabilities around the state and their efforts to become part of their communities, it's time to revisit the laws mentioned in Betty's letter.*

# SELF-ADVOCATES: LEARN ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS, LEARN THE LAW

## Did You Know about the ADA?

There are many laws that protect your rights. They are very powerful because they can help you to fight discrimination.

Discrimination happens when you are treated differently or unfairly because you have a disability.

One of the most important laws is the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is also called the "ADA." This law gives civil rights protections to people with disabilities so that you can have the same opportunities that everyone else does.

You have the right to be a part of your community. You have the right to be able to get into public buildings just as easily as everyone else.



You have the right to apply for jobs just like everyone else. You have the right to use public transportation just like everyone else does.

And you have the right to receive the best kinds of supports so you can live in the best place for you.



# Did You Know about Olmstead?

## The Olmstead Decision: a success story for two women

Because of the ADA, “Olmstead” was created.

In 1999, two women lived in a Georgia institution and they wanted to move out into their communities. Their staff thought it was a good idea, but the state said they could be treated just as well in the institution as they could in the community so they stayed in the institution.

The two women still wanted to move out and decided to take this to court. They found a lawyer to help them. They had to take their case all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States.

The lawyer for the two women told the Supreme Court that the State of Georgia was guilty of discrimination and not obeying the “ADA.”

The Supreme court agreed with the women and said that they could move out of the institution.



**So, what does the Olmstead Decision mean for us?**

The Supreme Court said that all the states must respect the wishes of people with disabilities to live in their own communities:

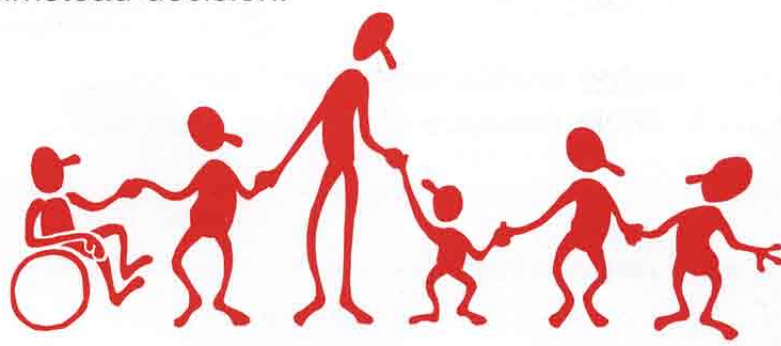
- if they want to.
- if the professionals decide that it is a good idea.
- if their supports won't cost the state more than if they continue to live in the institution.

The court said that this is a civil rights issue and that discrimination includes segregation, isolation and unnecessary institutionalization of people with disabilities. People have a legal right to receive supports in the least restrictive environment.

After the Supreme Court made its decision, President George W. Bush issued an Executive Order that said the federal government must help the states to develop plans to obey the conditions of the Olmstead Decision.

The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C., said, "No American should have to live in a nursing home or in a state institution if that individual can live in the community with the right mix of affordable supports."

Then, the Federal Government in Washington, D.C., sent a letter to the Governors and State Medicaid Directors of all the states telling them they were responsible for developing a plan so that they could obey the Olmstead decision.





# Indiana responds to Olmstead

## Governor O'Bannon signs Executive Order on Sept. 18, 2000!

Indiana Governor Frank O'Bannon signed an executive order that states that the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) will conduct an in-depth study of all the services and programs available to people with disabilities in Indiana.

## The Big Job!

Indiana is working on its first steps to support people with disabilities in their communities. It's a big job! There are many people with disabilities in Indiana and the state government is responsible for putting together a system of supports that works for everyone.

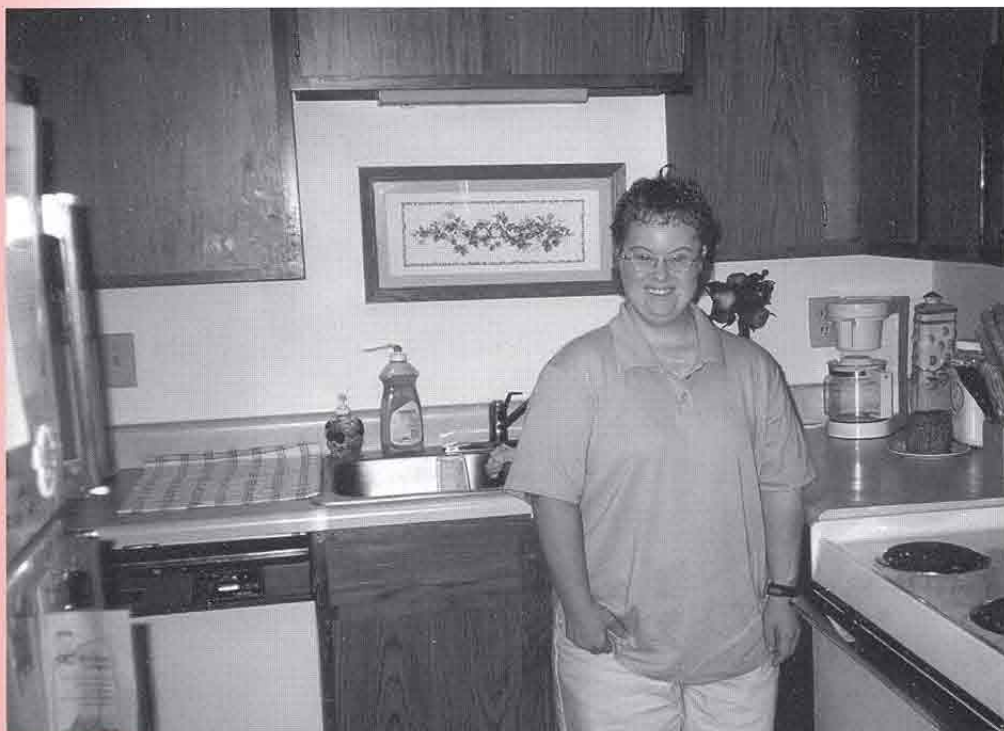
FSSA has chosen **6 policy statements** that they will use to guide them in developing the system of community supports for people with disabilities:

- 1: Emphasize Consumer choice: Enable people to receive the types of services they want in the location they prefer.
- 2: Increase the system capacity for provision of high-quality Care.
- 3: Support the informal network of families, neighbors and communities.
- 4: Provide information, assistance and access to consumers to increase their opportunity for informed choice.
- 5: Strengthen quality assurance, monitoring systems, complaint systems and advocacy efforts.
- 6: Create a coordinated workforce development system that recruits and supports a stable resource of direct support staff.

On the following pages are highlights of the **6 policy statements** and how different self-advocates have experienced them.

## **POLICY STATEMENT #1 - EMPHASIZE CONSUMER CHOICE: ENABLE PEOPLE TO RECEIVE THE TYPES OF SERVICES THEY WANT IN THE LOCATION THEY PREFER.**

People should be able to live and work in the community they choose. People should have the services and supports they need to live in their community. Funding should follow the consumer, not the provider and should be enough to meet their needs.



### ***Policy Statement In Action***

"My name is Shelly Hackett. I have three jobs. I work at the SRSC, at Options and at Bunger-Robertson. I sort papers there. At Options I do mailings. I've been living in my own apartment now for over a year. I really like it. I decorated it myself. I take care of myself. Every morning I do my exercises. I do Yoga and Richard Simmons. And I do my own laundry. My staff help me with some things. They drive me places like to the grocery store. They help me with planning my schedule and give me reminders. I'm a pretty good cook and baker. I think I'm a good self-advocate because I like to talk to people and they do understand me. I have a lot of hobbies. I love music, especially country music.



I like to go to Mike's Barn Place to go dancing. They have a band there. I watch the Grand Ole Opry every Saturday night. I love to do needlepoint. I taught myself. I did a latch hook rug in high school. My mom still has it. Another thing I like to do is to go swimming and go horse back riding with my mom in Brown County. I've been riding since I was six years old. My mom taught me how to ride and we ride together.

I'm the treasurer of our Monroe County self-advocates group. When we have meetings, we order pizza. People call me and tell me how many pieces of pizza they want and I write it down so our helper can order the pizza. Our helper had to leave so we aren't having any meetings now. I wish we could find a new helper so we can start our meetings again. All my friends are self-advocates. We want to be able to go on trips and to the state self-advocacy meetings in Indianapolis.

I like to tell people about self-advocates. I got to be interviewed on *Dateline: Diversity*, a program on WFHB Bloomington community radio. Here I am with the host of the show, Dr. Jeff Harlig."



## **POLICY STATEMENT #2: INCREASE THE SYSTEM CAPACITY FOR PROVISION OF HIGH-QUALITY CARE.**

FSSA realizes that their system of services to people with disabilities needs to be strengthened. FSSA needs to improve their system so that they can find new providers and assist in the development of new ideas for supports and services to people with disabilities.

### ***Policy Statement In Action***

***“It’s important to remember our faces; we’re not just names on a list.”***

***- Betty Williams***



## **The “317” Plan for Home and Community-Based Services INDIANA’S PLAN FOR COMMUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

### ***“317” – Phase 1: A Law and a Task Force***

In 1997, Governor O’Bannon signed Senate Bill 317 into law. The law called for the development of a task force made up of consumers, advocates and state officials to study Indiana’s system of services for people with developmental disabilities. The “317” plan identified over 6,000 people who were waiting for home and community-based services. That was unacceptable to the Governor and the task force.

The task force developed a plan whereby the state legislature would assign funding to help people get off the waiting list and receive the services they had been needing. 2,273 people began to receive community-based services because of the first phase of the “317” law. And yet there was more work to be done.

### ***“317” – Phase 2: Medicaid Program Changes Advance the “317” Plan***

Medicaid Waivers are an important key to maintaining your home in your community. Medicaid waivers have been supporting people in the community for 10 years and still there is a waiting list. Fortunately, Indiana recently obtained approval for two new waivers and Targeted Case Management.



*The Indiana Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services Waiver for Person with Developmental Disabilities* - it's called the DD Waiver. The second waiver is the Medicaid Support Services Waiver. This waiver can be used by people who are waiting for the Autism or DD Waivers. Don't worry, the Autism Waiver, the Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver and the Medically Fragile Children's Waiver are still available to people who qualify. The CHOICE program is still available for people of all ages if they are unable to perform two or more activities of daily living without support.

*Targeted Case Management* – Do you need help with on-going planning and problem-solving? Then Targeted Case Management is for you. Do you need help with finding needed services? Then Targeted Case Management is the answer. The Gatekeepers are the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA's). They are the ones you need to call. There are 16 AAA's that serve all 92 counties in Indiana. Their capable staff can meet with you to start the process for qualifying for assistance.

And there is more good news. An important part of community living is safe and affordable housing. The Back Home in Indiana Alliance is working toward that goal. Darcus was recently asked to talk at a ribbon cutting ceremony for some people who had just gotten their home. It was so exciting.

*The Back Home Alliance* has been formed to increase opportunities for home ownership and individualized and dispersed rental housing for people with disabilities in Indiana. The mission of the Indiana alliance is to create opportunities for people with disabilities to own or rent their own homes; to support persons with disabilities to exercise control over decisions affecting their lives, to facilitate the provision of adequate and individually determined in-home services and community supports; to separate housing and support services; and to evaluate on an on-going basis the outcomes of home ownership.



Dear fellow Self-Advocates,



As president of your state-wide self-advocacy chapter, I ask you to join me in a campaign to teach people that we deserve respect as equal citizens of Indiana.

**This is our civil right and  
this is our Civil Rights Movement.**

It was not too many years ago that African-American people fought for their civil rights. Back in 1957, our Federal Government enacted a law that said people could not be discriminated against because of their race, color, religion or national origin. Those people had a long and hard time convincing their communities that they deserved respect.

They still had to ride in the back of the buses. They could not eat in restaurants where white people ate. They could not use restrooms that were for white people. They could not go to the white people's schools. But they kept on trying. It wasn't until the 1960's that they found leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and Cesar Chavez who could rally all the civil rights activists and help to make changes.

I can tell you this because I was able to visit the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute while I was at a national self-advocacy board meeting in Birmingham, Alabama. What I saw there brought tears to my eyes and I made a promise to myself that I would share this with you. Our wish to be respected as fellow human beings is our civil right.



### **POLICY STATEMENT #3: SUPPORT THE INFORMAL NETWORK OF FAMILIES, NEIGHBORS AND COMMUNITIES.**



Family caregivers provide far more supportive services than ever can be provided through paid services.

With family size shrinking and more parents both having to work, their ability to care for their loved ones is getting harder and harder.

It is becoming more and more important to find ways to support the family caregivers.

### **POLICY STATEMENT #4: PROVIDE INFORMATION, ASSISTANCE AND ACCESS TO CONSUMERS TO INCREASE THEIR OPPORTUNITY FOR INFORMED CHOICE.**

All people in Indiana should be able to get information and assistance in ways that meet their cultural diversity.

So, Indiana government leaders applied for and were awarded a \$200,000 federal grant to help people with disabilities. FSSA Secretary, John Hamilton, announced on December 3, 2001, that people with disabilities and their families would be helped to get needed information and access to resources available in their communities.

The grant will fund a family support pilot program in 18 southeastern counties in Indiana. The goal is to help existing networks better serve families and to develop new networks in the region.

Indiana also will develop a new 211 telephone system. People will be able to dial 211 and find information on all human service organizations in the state.

The Southeast Regional Planning Council has been formed and is working on the family support pilot program. Funds will be available through grants to develop family support networks in Southeastern Indiana.

The counties included are: Brown, Bartholomew, Clark, Crawford, Decatur, Dearborn, Floyd, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Lawrence, Ohio, Orange, Ripley, Scott, Switzerland, and Washington.

**POLICY STATEMENT #5: STRENGTHEN QUALITY ASSURANCE, MONITORING SYSTEMS, COMPLAINT SYSTEMS AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS.**

People deserve high quality services wherever they receive them and they should have ways to protect themselves.

***Policy Statement In Action***

“I’m Lisa Thacker from Indianapolis. I like being a self-advocate because I learn new things like how to be a better speaker. It’s challenging for me but I like to try new things. Something new and challenging for me is to be on the board of Self-Advocates of Indiana.



I live in my own apartment and I like it but I don’t get out as much as I’d like to. The place I’m living at now needs to get a handicapped van.

I can’t get in to a small car because it’s not accessible and it’s dangerous. My circle of support is helping me with my transportation problems.”



**POLICY STATEMENT #6: CREATE A COORDINATED WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM THAT RECRUITS AND SUPPORTS A STABLE RESOURCE OF DIRECT SUPPORT STAFF.**

Direct support staff are critical to the quality of life of people with disabilities. These staff need to be trained and supported in their work.

***Policy Statement In Action***



"I'm Betty Stivers and I am the helper for the Brookville Self-Advocates. As a helper, I try to only be helpful when I'm asked and it works very successfully.

They have been told all their lives what to do and could not make decisions for themselves.

Now, it's good to see that after all these years they have made some very good decisions on their own.

The treasurer will ask for help counting the money and I'm glad to help. The secretary doesn't write but she can read well so I take the notes, Stanley types them and prints them up and she reads them at the meetings.

I think a good helper is understanding. A good helper is a good listener without trying to ask questions. Sometimes it takes a while to listen, but we need to give people time to finish their ideas."

## ***Policy Statement In Action***

“My name is Pam Gwinnup. My role as a helper in the community is important to me. I think it makes a difference when people are asserting themselves. When they are asserting themselves, they are learning to communicate their



own desires. They have been so used to taking direction from others. With more opportunities for self-advocacy and one-on-one time with their staff in the community, they can be more relaxed.

Things come up that you're not expecting. They have the opportunity to learn that what they want counts, not what others think they need and want. People in the community learn that people with disabilities have their own personalities and talents. They can communicate and they can do more than people expect from them. It gives them an identity in the community.”

***“It reminds me of what I saw at the Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham. Just like back in the 60’s when the African-***



***Americans were fighting for their rights, they had allies who helped them. The allies weren’t African-Americans but they believed in the cause of equality for all. We, as persons with developmental disabilities, have allies who understand what we are saying. We can be proud of that.”***

***- Betty Williams***



# Self-Advocates believe in: Self-Determination

As we experience true community living, we see how important the principles of self-determination are to us. For those of you who are beginning your journey to community, here are some beliefs to support you.

## Self-Determination is:

- Having a choice
- Spending money our way
- Being in control
- Knowing more about ourselves
- Making our own decisions
- Having dreams and goals and going after them

*We want -*

**The Freedom to plan a real life:** The ability for a person with a disability, along with freely chosen family and friends, to plan their own life, with necessary support, rather than purchase a program.

**The Authority over our resources:** The ability of a person with a disability to control a certain sum of dollars in order to purchase supports.

**The Support for building a life in our communities:** The arranging of resources and personnel, both formal and informal, that will assist a person with a disability to live a life in the community that is rich in social associations and contributions.

**The Responsibility to give back to our communities:** The acceptance of a valued role in a person's community through competitive employment, organizational affiliations, spiritual development and general caring for others in the community, as well as accountability for spending public dollars in ways that are life enhancing for persons with disabilities.

*- from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's National Program:  
Self-Determination for Persons with Developmental Disabilities*

With self-determination, we are living out the Olmstead Decision. You too can join us!

## *The Freedom to plan a real life*



"I'm Richard Cook and I live in Greenfield. When I got started in self-advocacy, I lived in Bloomington, Indiana.

I got my first taste of self-advocacy when I went to

the group at Stone Belt Center. That's where I got my feet wet, as they say. I went to a few meetings and then I became the president of the group.

When I moved to Greenfield, I went to the director of The Arc of Hancock County and asked her if she would help me start a self-advocacy group. We started our group in September of 1995.

When we were having our meetings we noticed that the local McDonalds didn't have an accessible restroom. We talked to them. They now have an accessible restroom because of what our little group did.

I like helping other people like myself. They are learning how to stand up for themselves as people, not like the stereotype of the handicapped. They want to be known as people, not because of their disability.

My message to the general public would be that years and years ago I thought handicapped people were funny. But then when I became one, I stopped thinking that way.

I was hit by a car and that's how I got my disability. I understand more of what they were going through at that time."



## ***The Authority over our resources***

“My name is Rhea Wigel. I like being a self-advocate. I want the self-advocates to believe in themselves no matter who they are.



My one wish for self-advocates of Indiana would be for people to be friends with people with developmental disabilities. We take trips and we learn a lot. We learn how to stand up for our rights. We learn how to speak to other people about our rights and our intelligence. We learn other things about our problems and when people pick on us.

We talk about issues that are important to us, like making our own decisions because you're an adult and you shouldn't let others make your decisions for you. I make my own decisions. My special friend, Billie Jo, and I go places together. We have a lot of things in common. We like to go shopping and we like food. I will cherish her forever.”

## ***The Responsibility to give back to our communities***



“I’m Norma Jean Schwering. I am on the board of Self-Advocates of Indiana and I am a Regional Representative for the East-Central part of the state. In my role as Regional Representative, I take information from our group and take it to the state group to discuss. I also take news of the state group back to our region. I’ve always wanted to do this and help people with disabilities learn more.”

## ***The Support for Building a life in our communities***

"We're Marga and Harold Nelson. We were married in 1991. We told our families that we wanted to get married and they said go ahead



and do it. We had a really nice wedding. She wore a pretty white dress with something in her hair and I wore a tux. We went to a hotel in Muncie and spent the night for our honeymoon.

Our relationship has been stronger since we've been married. I can be with her if she gets sick. I can take her to the hospital and she can get better. Our families and staff support us with bills and stuff. We'd like to move into a house so she can have a cat and I can store my weights and stuff."

## ***The Freedom to plan a real life***

"I am Richard Brooks and I live in Greenfield. I made a friend when I went to Shoneys. His name is Steve and we drank coffee together and went to bible study together.



We had a great time together but then he had to move. We still write each other letters. We are going to have lunch together soon. I like to go to self-advocacy meetings and talk. I like it because people listen to me. I can tell them my feelings about different things in my life and what I want to do. I like to learn new things."



"My name is David Grider. I have been a self-advocate since the beginning when we went to Portland, Oregon, to learn about self-advocacy.



I am the vice-president of the Indianapolis Self-Advocates group and the Treasurer of Self-Advocates of Indiana. Sheila is my girlfriend. We go to Washington Square to shop and go to the movies. This summer we'll go to the Marion County Fair. I'd like us to get married. My relationship with Sheila is important because she's the best girl I've ever had. Her mom kind of likes me too."

### *The Freedom to plan a real life*

"My name is Carol. I have a boyfriend. We've been dating for 14 years. We go on dates and go shopping and out to lunch.

Jerry makes me laugh. I like his attitude. We'd like to get married. I like to go swimming. I have an inner tube and I need someone to help me when I swim."





"I am Diane Hodgekin. I work in the audio-video department at the Morrison-Reeves Library in Richmond, Indiana. I come in around 9:30 and clean and rewind the tapes. If I find some missing, I report it and they look them up and find out who forgot to turn them in. I also do the CD tapes.

I like my boss. We get along and we laugh and tease him because he comes in on his days off. When I finish work, I go upstairs and check out some books. I like to read."

### ***The Responsibility to give back to our communities***

"My name is Roxanna Robertson. I am the secretary of Self-Advocates of Indiana. I take notes at the state-wide meetings and we're working on our by-laws so we can become incorporated. I like to teach people that we're just like everyone else and we can go out in the community. I'm getting a waiver. Some day I'd like to live on my own. It's kind of scary but I know I won't have my parents forever. One thing I'd like to tell other people with disabilities: just give it your best shot and go out there and try new things and enjoy your life.



Transportation is a problem in our town. They say the bus is supposed to come around but they stop at 6 o'clock. Then I'm stuck. I have to count on my mom and dad or my brother. The van comes to pick me up on church days. So, I get to see my friends then. I don't get to see my friends often because they live in another town. It's important to have friends so you won't be alone."



We have a law that stands up for people with disabilities. Now we need to change the attitude.

Some people still think that because we have a disability, we are not equal. People with physical disabilities are advocating for themselves. People are listening to them because they are speaking up. Now it is time for people with developmental disabilities to speak up.

**So, what can you do?**

- You can remember that you have the right to dream and to make choices about your life.
- You can tell your family and supporters where you would like to live and work.
- You can ask for more information for things you have questions about.
- You can ask to be shown what different choices would mean for you.
- You can ask for support to join in activities that you are interested in.

And, you don't need to do this alone. You can join a self-advocacy group or start one of your own. Darcus and I have experienced the power that comes from sharing our thoughts and dreams with our fellow self-advocates. And Self-Advocates of Indiana is ready and eager to help you find that power.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betty".

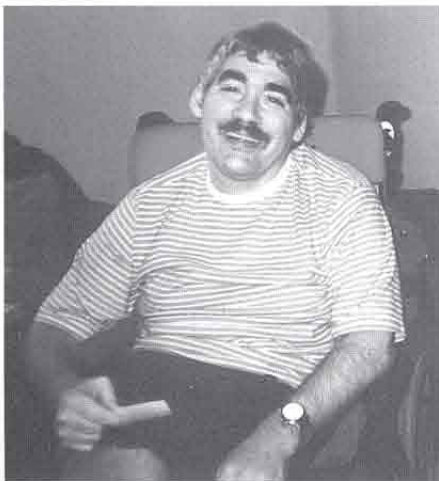
Betty Williams, President  
Self-Advocates of Indiana

## ***The Responsibility to give back to our communities***



“My name is David Orton. I have been a self-advocate since 1990. I like helping people be more independent. I am the secretary of our Indianapolis self-advocacy group. I take attendance at the meetings and write the minutes. I make copies of the minutes for all the members and we review them at our next meeting.

I want people to know that people with disabilities are the same as everyone else. We are all different, just not too different. I tell people to be yourself. We have the same feelings and dreams as everyone else. I have a lot of responsibilities in my job as a clerical assistant.”



### ***The Freedom to plan a real life***

“My name is Michael Hill and I live in a group home now but I am glad I am moving out into my own apartment with my new friend soon. I’ll have to do everything myself. It’s a good feeling.

I’ll be going to the grocery store. I like going shopping. I would also like to get a job at Blockbuster.”



# Are you wanting more information?

*You can contact:*

## **The Governor's Planning Council for People with Disabilities**

150 W. Market St., Suite 628

Indianapolis, IN 46204

317-232-7770

Web site: [www.GPCPD@in.net](http://www.GPCPD@in.net)

## **The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community**

2853 E. 10<sup>th</sup> St.

Bloomington, IN 47408

800-275-4733 or 812-855-6508

Web site: [www.iidc.indiana.edu](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu)

## **The Arc of Indiana**

107 N. Pennsylvania St., Suite 300

Indianapolis, IN 46204

800-382-9100 or 317-977-2375

Web site: [www.arcind.org](http://www.arcind.org)

## **Indiana Family and Social Services Administration**

402 W. Washington St.

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Web site: [www.in.gov/fssa/servicedisabl/olmsteadreview&planning.html](http://www.in.gov/fssa/servicedisabl/olmsteadreview&planning.html)

## **State Office of the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services**

800-545-7763

## **Office of Consumer and Family Affairs**

The Division of Mental Health and Addiction

402 W. Washington St., Room W353

Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739

317-232-7912

Web site: [www.in.gov/fssa/shape\\_home.html](http://www.in.gov/fssa/shape_home.html)

**SHAPE - Serving the Hoosier Plan through Education**  
800-813-6511

**Medicaid Waivers and CHOICE**  
800-986-3505

**Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services**  
4701 N. Keystone Ave., Suite 222  
Indianapolis, IN 46205  
800-622-4845; TTY: 800-838-1131

**Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)**  
Web site: [www.sabeusa.org](http://www.sabeusa.org)  
Region 5 Representative - Betty Williams: 765-935-4319

**Self-Advocates of Indiana**  
Betty Williams, Richmond: 765-935-4319  
Darcus Nims, Indianapolis: 317-780-1152

**Family Support Council**  
Contact: Pat Stewart at ATTIC  
812-886-0575  
E-Mail: [INATTIC@aol.com](mailto:INATTIC@aol.com)  
Web site: [www.in.gov/fssa/servicedisabl/supportreport.html](http://www.in.gov/fssa/servicedisabl/supportreport.html)

**Advocating Change Together (ACT)**  
1821 University Avenue, Suite 306-S  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
651-641-0297  
Web site: [www.selfadvocacy.com](http://www.selfadvocacy.com)

**Back Home in Indiana Alliance**  
Contact person: Deb McCarty  
317-638-2392

**Area Agencies on Aging**  
800-986-3505

**Southeast Regional Planning Council**  
Contact person: Dr. Victoria C. Pappas  
Indiana Institute on Disability and Community  
800-825-4733





# Self Advocates of

**OUR MISSION: TO LEARN OUR RIGHTS AND TO SPEAK OUT ABOUT OUR RIGHTS  
SO THAT WE GET THE RESPECT WE DESERVE.**

We resolve:

- To educate people with developmental disabilities about their rights and the opportunities for them in their communities. We want people to know that they can make decisions about their lives and the supports they need. It is time for people with developmental disabilities to learn how to speak up for themselves. The time is gone when we have to accept the decisions of others even if we don't agree with them.
- To educate parents and supporters to calm their fears and encourage them to see the capabilities of their loved ones.
- To educate the public on what it means to have a developmental disability. We are working to open the doors of communication and change the age-old stereotypes that have kept us from being considered contributing members of our communities. Neighbors can learn they don't have to be afraid of a person just because he or she talks or acts differently.

**Betty Williams**  
*President of SAI*



# Indiana Mission



- To increase community capacity so that everyone can live independently. Business and civic community members can learn that they can benefit from the contributions of people with developmental disabilities. People can be and are good workers and team members.
- To develop leadership among people with developmental disabilities across the state. There are many self-advocates around the state who would like to join our leadership. They only need some support to do so.
- To expand the principles of self-determination and self-advocacy to all regions of Indiana. Currently there are many counties in Indiana that do not have identified self-advocacy groups. We are working to change that.



**Darcus Nims  
and Lisa Thacker,**  
*Self-Advocates of  
Indiana board  
member*

“Self-Advocates of Indiana is not like it was 10 years ago. We still have a lot to do because of changes we want to get done. Our board is working hard to develop and lead our organization so that we can be an effective resource to people with developmental disabilities and their families throughout Indiana.” - *Darcus Nims*



# OUR STATE ORGANIZATION AT WORK

## ***"We educate"***

*At Partners in Policy Making, Darcus shared her philosophy on self-advocacy and self-determination.*



## ***"We apply for funding"***

*The Self-Advocates of Indiana organization needs on-going, stable funding. Betty attended the Grantsmanship Workshop in Indianapolis to increase her grant-writing skills.*

## ***"We learn from self-advocates from other states"***

*Presenters from "Advocating Change Together" (ACT) of Minnesota provided leadership training to the SAI's newly elected board of directors at their first board retreat.*





*Betty met with national self-advocacy leaders Teresa Moore, Nancy Ward, and Tia Nellis at the Project VOTE training in Phoenix.*

### ***"We network with national self-advocacy leaders"***

Betty and Darcus are offering training to people with disabilities that is designed to increase their information, skills and opportunities to vote.

The goals of Project VOTE are to increase the voting knowledge, skills and participation of people with developmental disabilities, to build and support the efforts of local communities in working collaboratively with people with developmental disabilities regarding their rights and responsibilities to voting, and to develop recommendations that address the key barriers to voting, such as policies related to guardianship.

Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) is the national self-advocacy organization made up of individuals with developmental disabilities from across the United States. Betty is regional representative for region five of SABE.

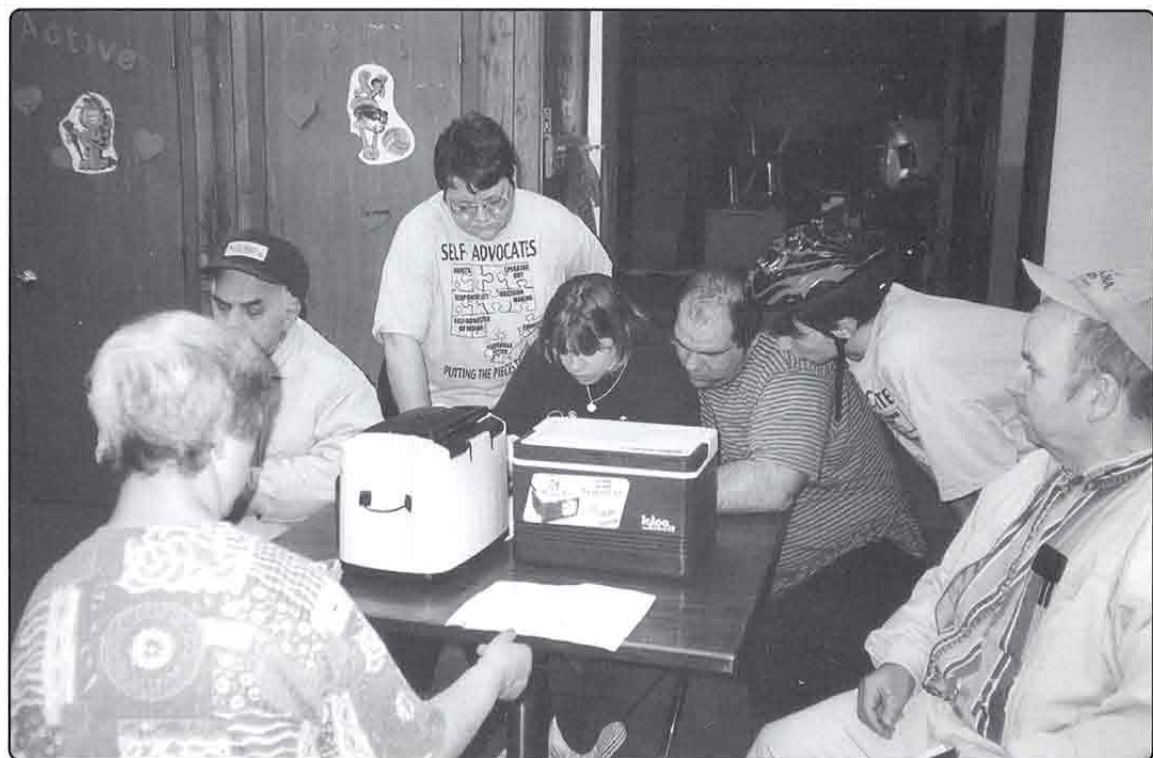
Through SABE, Betty has participated in Project Leadership, an initiative that brings key self-advocates and parent/family leaders to Washington, D.C., to gain knowledge and skills that they can use to advance the goals of self-determination through policymaking at the federal level and to create a nationwide Leadership Network.



## **“Our Indiana network is active in self-advocacy”**

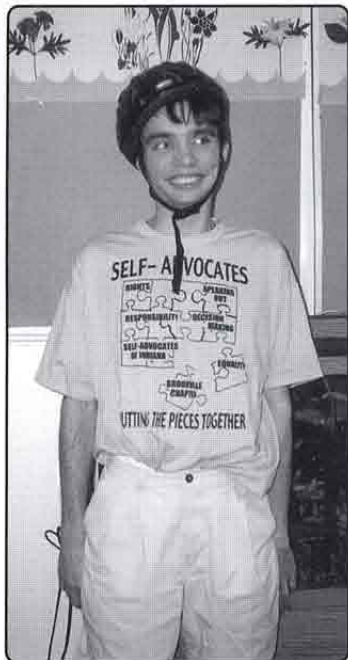


*Michael and Stanley hear the Brookville Self-Advocates treasurer's report. "Our treasurer keeps track of the money we have earned from our fund-raisers."*



*"We work together:" The Brookville Self-Advocacy group reads the secretary minutes at the start of a meeting.*

## INDIANA NETWORK: BROOKVILLE



"I'm Michael Berger from Brookville. I am the president of the Brookville Self-Advocates. Our group has done a lot of fund-raising. We have been selling these shirts. The shirts tell what self-advocacy means - Rights, Responsibilities, Speaking Out, Decision Making, Equality, Brookville chapter, and Self-Advocates of Indiana. We have been selling candy bars and filling the pop machine. For every case of pop we put in to the pop machine we get three dollars.

We use the money for our treasury. We use it to go out and to have dances with a DJ. We pay him \$50 even though he says we don't have to. We pay him because it's his time and energy he is using. The dances are a big responsibility. We have set-up crews and clean-up crews."

"I am Stanley Sumner from Brookville. I am the vice-president of the Brookville Self-Advocates. Michael and I talk a lot about problems our group might have. Our group means a lot to us. We are trying to tie in with the Richmond self-advocates but it's hard because we're spread so far apart. I'd like to see self-advocacy keep growing and going on. You have other friends beyond your own home area. But it takes time to hunt them up and get to know the other people.



Like when I first met Darcus and those guys, they spoke to me but I was more like a shut-in. But I kept working at it and working at it and eventually I opened up and started talking to them. I'd like to see us all tie up somewhere like use the parks as much as we can in the summer time so the public can see us and get to know us and understand where we stand instead of us being behind four walls all the time."



# ***Self-Advocates of Indiana***

